

Department I - C Plus Plus

# Modern and Lucid C++ for Professional Programmers

Week 4 – Functions and Exceptions

Thomas Corbat / Felix Morgner  
Rapperswil, 11.10.2022  
HS2022



- **You can choose the most suitable way to take parameters in functions**
- **You know how to write a lambda with a capture**
- **You know 5 different ways to react to errors in functions**
- **You know how to throw, catch and test exceptions**

- **Recap Week 3**
- **Functions**
  - Parameters / Return Types
  - Default Arguments
  - Lambdas with Captures
- **Error Handling in Functions**
- **Exceptions**

## Recap Week 3



- The following function should copy the inputStream to the outputStream

- It does not compile
- If not, why? And how can it be fixed?

```
auto redirectStreamIO(std::istream & inputStream, std::ostream & outputStream) -> void {  
    using input = std::istream_iterator<char>;  
    input eof{};  
    input in{inputStream};  
    std::copy(in, eof, outputStream);  
}
```

- The stream cannot be used directly with standard algorithms

- It must be wrapped in an std::istream\_iterator<char>

- Now the function compiles

```
auto redirectStreamIO(std::istream & inputStream, std::ostream & outputStream) -> void {  
    using input = std::istream_iterator<char>;  
    input eof{};  
    input in{inputStream};  
    std::copy(in, eof, std::ostream_iterator<char>{outputStream});  
}
```

- What will be written to outputStream if the inputStream argument contains the following input?

Input

I'm going to be an engineer!  
Very soon...

Output

I'mgoingtobeanengineer!Verysoon...

- What change is required to get the complete input (including whitespace)?

```
auto redirectStreamIO(std::istream & inputStream, std::ostream & outputStream) -> void {  
    using input = std::istreambuf_iterator<char>;  
    input eof{};  
    input in{inputStream};  
    std::copy(in, eof, std::ostream_iterator<char>{outputStream});  
}
```

- Or use the noskipws manipulator

```
auto redirectStreamIO(std::istream & inputStream, std::ostream & outputStream) -> void {  
    using input = std::istream_iterator<char>;  
    input eof{};  
    input in{inputStream};  
    inputStream >> std::noskipws;  
    std::copy(in, eof, std::ostream_iterator<char>{outputStream});  
}
```

# Functions



## Goals:

- You know the different ways of passing parameters to functions
- You know how to pass default arguments to functions
- You know how to write a lambda



	<b>const:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parameter cannot be changed</li> </ul>	<b>non-const:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parameter can be changed</li> </ul>
<b>reference:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Argument on call-site is accessed</li> </ul>	<pre>auto f(std::string const &amp; s) -&gt; void {     //no modification     //efficient for large objects }</pre>	<pre>auto f(std::string &amp; s) -&gt; void {     //modification possible     //side-effect also at call-site }</pre>
<b>copy:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Function has its own copy of the parameter</li> </ul>	<pre>auto f(std::string const s) -&gt; void {     //no modification     //used for maximum constness }</pre>	<pre>auto f(std::string s) -&gt; void {     //modification possible     //side-effect only locally }</pre>

## ● Call-site always looks the same

- Note: You cannot pass a const argument to a non-const reference!

```
std::string name{"John"};
f(name);
```

- **Value Parameter:** `auto f(type par) -> void;`
  - Default for parameters
- **Reference Parameter:** `auto f(type & par) -> void;`
  - When side-effect is required at call-site
- **Const-Reference Parameter:** `auto f(type const & par) -> void;`
  - Possible optimization, when type is large (costly to copy) and no side-effects desired at call-site
  - For non-copyable objects
- **Const Value Parameter:** `auto f(type const par) -> void;`
  - The coding style guide of your project this might prefer this over non-const value parameters
  - Could prevent changing the parameter in the function inadvertently

- **By Value:** `auto f() -> type;`

- Default for return types

- **By Reference:** `auto f() -> type; or auto f() -> type const &;`

- Only return a reference parameter (or a class member variable from a member function)

```
auto sayHello(std::ostream & out) -> std::ostream & {  
    return out << "Hello";  
}
```

- Never return a reference to a local variable!

```
auto create() -> std::string & {  
    std::string name{"John"};  
    return name;  
}
```



- **By Const Value:** `auto f() -> type const;`

- Don't do this, it just annoys the caller

```
auto connect(Address address) -> Connection & {  
    Connection connection{address};  
    //...  
    return connection;  
}
```

**Incorrect**

The connection only lives within the connection function. The returned reference will be dangling. A compiler can detect and report this.

```
auto createPOI(Coordinate) -> POI;  
  
auto allPOIs(Coordinate const location) {  
    //...  
    POI const & migros = createPOI(location);  
    //...  
    return std::vector{migros};  
}
```

**Unusual, but correct**

const & extends the life-time of the temporary POI, until the end of the block. The POI will be copied into the returned std::vector object

```
auto modify(LargeDocument & document) -> void;  
  
auto changeDocument() -> void {  
    LargeDocument const document{};  
    modify(document);  
}
```

**Incorrect**

The document object is const, therefore it must not be modified (directly or indirectly). The function modify might change it as it takes a LargeDocument by reference.

```
auto print(LargeDocument const & document) -> void;
```

```
auto printAll() -> void {  
    LargeDocument document{};  
    print (document);  
}
```

Correct

The (large) object document can be passed as const &, even though it is modifiable.

```
auto max(  
    std::string const & left,  
    std::string const & right) -> std::string const & {  
    return (left > right) ? left : right;  
}
```

```
auto main() -> int {  
    std::string const & larger = max("a", "b");  
    std::cout << "larger is: " << larger;  
}
```

Incorrect

const & only extends the life-time of temporaries. The return type of max() is a reference, not a value. Therefore, its life-time is bound to the life-time of the returned object. The returned object is either argument of max(). Those in turn are temporary std::string objects created from "a" and "b", which only live until the end of the statement. Beware: Small string optimization!

```
auto incr(int & var) -> void;  
auto incr(int & var, unsigned delta) -> void;
```


- **The same function name can be used for different functions if parameter number or types differ**
  - Functions cannot be overloaded just by their return type
  - If only the parameter type is different there might be ambiguities
- **Resolution of overloads happens at compile-time = Ad hoc polymorphism**
- **Internal name of a function also contains its parameter types as significant information (not the parameter names)**
  - Information required by the linker

```
auto factorial(int n) -> int {
    if (n > 1) {
        return n * factorial(n - 1);
    }
    return 1;
}

auto factorial(double n) -> double {
    double result = 1;
    if (n < 15) {
        return factorial(static_cast<int>(n));
    }
    while (n > 1) {
        result *= n;
        --n;
    }
    return result;
}
```

```
auto demoAmbiguity() -> void {
    std::cout << factorial(3) << '\n';
    std::cout << factorial(1e2) << '\n';

    std::cout << factorial(10u) << '\n';
    std::cout << factorial(1e1L) << '\n';
}
```



```
auto incr(int & var, unsigned delta = 1) -> void;
```

- **A function declaration can provide default arguments for its parameters from the right**

- Definition doesn't need to/shouldn't repeat
- = is required as part of the parameter declaration

```
auto incr(int & var, unsigned delta) -> void {  
    var += delta;  
}
```

- **Implicit overload of the function with fewer parameters**

- If n default arguments are provided, the behavior is, as if n+1 versions of the function were declared

- **Default arguments can be omitted when calling the function**

```
int counter{0};  
incr(counter);    //uses default for delta  
incr(counter, 5);
```



```
auto applyAndPrint(double x, auto f(double) -> double) -> void {
    std::cout << "f(" << x << ") = " << f(x) << '\n';
}
```

- **Functions are "first class" objects in C++**

- You can pass them as argument (to higher-order functions)
- You can keep them in reference variables

```
auto (&ref)(double) -> double
double (&ref)(double)
```

- **Drawback: A function parameter declared in this way does not accept a lambda with a capture**

```
auto main() -> int {
    double factor{3.0};
    auto const multiply = [factor](double value) {
        return factor * value;
    };
    applyAndPrint(1.5, multiply);
}
```



- **Modern C++ approach:** `std::function` template, which also allows passing lambdas (with capture)

```
auto applyAndPrint(double x, std::function<auto(double) -> double> f) -> void {  
    std::cout << "f(" << x << ") = " << f(x) << '\n';  
}  
  
auto main() -> int {  
    double factor{3.0};  
    auto const multiply = [factor](double value) {  
        return factor * value;  
    };  
    applyAndPrint(1.5, multiply);  
}
```

```
std::function<auto(double) -> double>  
std::function<double(double)>
```

Return Type

Parameter List

```
auto intsUpTo(std::size_t from = 0,
              std::size_t to) -> std::vector<int> {
    //ensure to >= from
    std::vector<int> values(to - from + 1);
    std::iota(values.begin(), values.end(), from);
    return values;
}
```

Incorrect

Default arguments have to be specified from right to left. If the definition and the declaration are separated the default argument should be specified at the declaration in the header.

```
auto square(int x, void print(int)) -> void {
    print(x * x);
}

auto main() -> int {
    auto p = [](auto value) {
        std::cout << value;
    };
    square(5, p);
}
```

Legacy, but correct

As the lambda does not capture anything it can be passed as function argument as is. However, a modern approach would use `std::function<void(int)>` as parameter type for the print function. E.g. a lambda capturing a stream could not be passed otherwise.

- **Defining inline functions**

```
auto const g = [](char c) -> char {  
    return std::toupper(c);  
};  
g('a');
```

- **auto const** for function variable from Lambda
- **[]** introduces a Lambda function
  - Can contain captures: [=] or [&] to access variables from scope
- **(Parameters)** as with other functions, but optional if empty
  - Parameters can be **auto** (Generic Lambda)
- **Body block with statements**

- **Capturing a local variable by value**

- Local copy lives as long as the lambda lives
- Local copy is immutable, unless lambda is declared mutable

```
int x = 5;
auto l = [x]() mutable {
    std::cout << ++x;
};
```

- **Capturing a local variable by reference**

- Allows modification of the captured variable
- Side-effect is visible in the surrounding scope, but referenced variable must live at least as long as the lambda lives

```
int x = 5;
auto const l = [&x]() {
    std::cout << ++x;
};
```

- **Capturing all local variables by value or reference**

```
int x = 5;
auto l = [=]() mutable {
    std::cout << ++x;
};
```

```
int x = 5;
auto const l = [&]() {
    std::cout << ++x;
};
```

- **Capturing this pointer**

- Allows accessing and modifying members of the class

```
struct S {  
    auto foo() -> void {  
        auto square = [this] {  
            member *= 2;  
        };  
    }  
private:  
    int member{};  
};
```

---

- **New local variable can be specified in capture**

- New variable in capture has type `auto`
- Can be modified if lambda is `mutable`

```
auto squares = [x = 1]() mutable {  
    std::cout << (x *= 2);  
};
```

---

- **In captures multiple variables can be combined and separated with commas (,)**

- In function definitions the trailing return-type could be omitted
- The actual return type will be deduced from the return statements in the function's body
  - The body must be present!

```
auto middle(std::vector<int> const & c) {  
    //check not empty  
    return c[c.size() / 2];  
}
```

```
auto <function-name>(<parameters>) -> <return-type>;
```

- If the return type of a function is declared as auto a trailing return type can specify the return type
  - In this case the function body is not required when specifying a trailing return type

```
auto middle(std::vector<int> const & c) -> int;  
  
auto middle(std::vector<int> const & c) -> int {  
    //check not empty  
    return c[c.size() / 2];  
}
```

- Can be used to explicitly specify the return type of a lambda

```
auto isOdd = [](auto value) -> bool {  
    return value % 2;  
};
```



```
#include <iostream>
```

```
int calculateAnswer();
```

```
int main() {  
    std::cout << calculateAnswer();  
}
```

### Correct

As long as the function is defined in another compilation unit (.cpp file). `main()` does not need a return statement. It implicitly returns 0 if none is provided.

It is unusual to explicitly provide a forward declaration of a function. A function usually is declared in a header file.

```
#include <iostream>
```

```
auto maxValue(int f, int s, int t);
```

```
int main() {  
    std::cout << maxValue(1, 2, 3);  
}
```

### Incorrect

The compiler needs a function body in order to deduce the return type. It would also be possible to insert a function definition before its first use or to supply a trailing return type instead. The latter would be unusual in this case.

- Statements are sequenced by ; (semicolon)
- Within a single expression, such as a function call, sequence of evaluation is undefined! (except for the comma operator , )

```
void sayGreeting(std::ostream & out,  
                std::string name1,  
                std::string name2){  
    out << "Hello " << name1 << ", do you love " << name2 << "?\n";  
}  
  
int main() {  
    askForName(std::cout);  
    sayGreeting(std::cout,  
                inputName(std::cin),  
                inputName(std::cin));  
}
```



# Failing Functions



Goals:

- You know 5 different ways to react to errors in functions

- **Precondition (Assumption) is violated**
  - Negative index
  - Divisor is zero
  - Usually caller provided wrong arguments
- **A function without preconditions has a so-called "wide contract" as opposed to "narrow contract"**
- **Postcondition could not be satisfied**
  - Resources for computation are not available
  - Can not open a file

Contract cannot be fulfilled

- **What should you do, if a function cannot fulfill its purpose?**
  1. Ignore the error and provide potentially **undefined behavior**
  2. Return a **standard result** to cover the error
  3. Return an **error code** or error value
  4. Provide an **error status** as a side-effect
  5. Throw an **exception**
- **But first you need to know, if it can fail at all!**



```
std::vector v{1, 2, 3, 4, 5};  
v[5] = 7;
```



- **Relies on the caller to satisfy all preconditions**
- **Viable only if not dependent on other resources**
- **Most efficient implementation**
  - No unnecessary checks
- **Simple for the implementer but harder for the caller**
- **Should be done consciously and consistently!**

```
auto inputName(std::istream & in) -> std::string {  
    std::string name{};  
    in >> name;  
    return name.size() ? name : "anonymous";  
}
```

- Reliefs the caller from the need to care if it can continue with the default value
- Can hide underlying problems
  - Debugging can give you nightmares
- Often better if caller can specify its own default value

```
auto inputNameWithDefault(std::istream & in,  
                          std::string const & def = "anonymous") -> std::string {  
    std::string name{};  
    in >> name;  
    return name.size() ? name : def;  
}
```

- **Only feasible if result domain is smaller than return type**

- There exists a value that can be used
- Sometimes invented artificially: `std::string::npos`

```
auto contains(std::string const & s, int number) -> bool {  
    auto substring = std::to_string(number);  
    return s.find(substring) != std::string::npos;  
}
```

- POSIX defines -1 to mark failure of many system calls

- **Burden on the caller to check the result**

- Danger of ignoring significant errors if result is otherwise insignificant

- **C++23 will introduce `std::expected`, a type that can contain either a value or an error**



- **Encodes the possibility of failure in the type system**

- Can optionally contain NO value (default construction)

```
auto inputName(std::istream & in) -> std::optional<std::string> {  
    std::string name{};  
    if (in >> name) return name;  
    return {};  
}
```

- **Requires explicit access of the value at the call site**

- has\_value() or boolean conversion checks whether the optional contains a value

```
auto main() -> int {  
    std::optional name = inputName(std::cin);  
    if (name.has_value()) {  
        std::cout << "Name: " << name.value() << '\n';  
    }  
}
```

```
auto main() -> int {  
    std::optional name = inputName(std::cin);  
    if (name) {  
        std::cout << "Name: " << *name << '\n';  
    }  
}
```

- **Requires reference parameter**

- Can be this object in member functions
- Annoying when error variable must be provided

```
auto connect(std::string url,  
             bool& error) -> int {  
    //set error when an error occurred  
}
```

- **(Bad!) Alternative: Global variable**

- POSIX' errno is the glorious example of that

- **Example: std::istream's state (good(), fail()) is changed as a side-effect of input**

```
std::string name{};  
in >> name;  
if (in.fail()) { //Member variable  
    //Handle error case  
}
```

- Prevent execution of invalid logic by throwing an exception

```
void sayGreeting(std::ostream & out, std::string name) {  
    if (name.empty()) {  
        throw std::invalid_argument{"Empty name"};  
    }  
    out << "Hello " << name << ", how are you?\n";  
}
```

# Exceptions

Goals:

- You know how to throw, catch and test exceptions



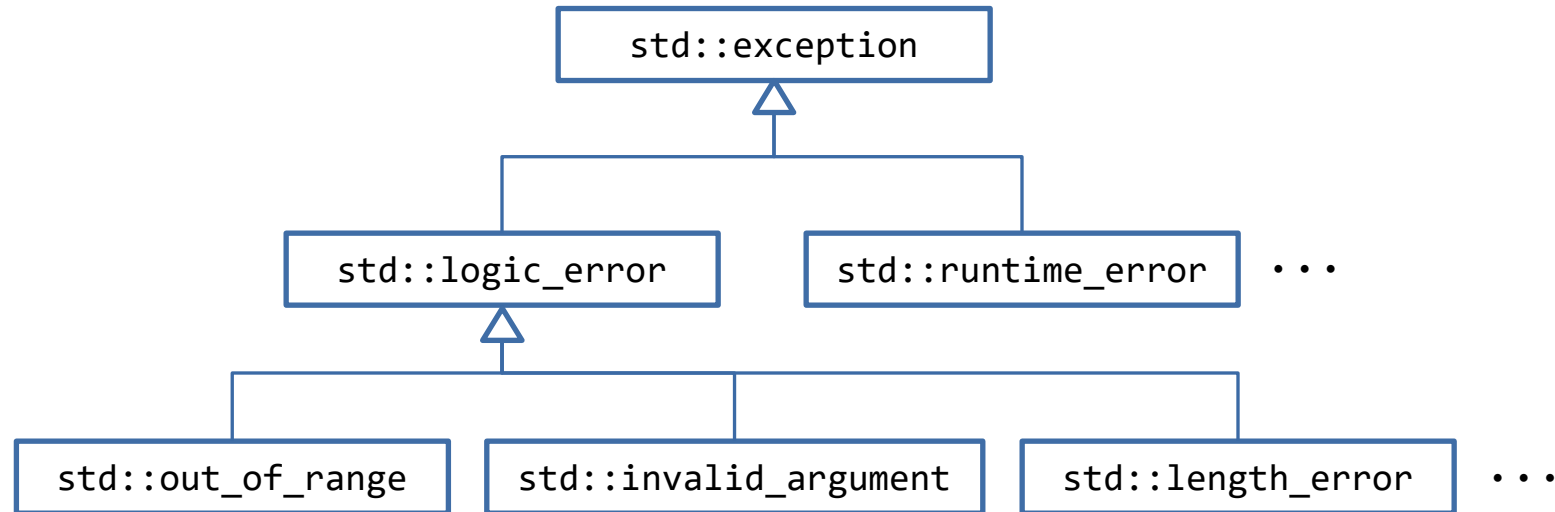
```
throw std::invalid_argument{"Description"};  
throw 15;
```

- **To throw an exception:** `throw value;`
  - Any (copyable) type can be thrown
- **No means to specify what could be thrown**
  - No checks if you catch an exception that might be thrown at call-site
- **No meta-information is available as part of the exception**
  - No stack trace, no source position of throw
- **Exception thrown while exception is propagated results in program abort (not while caught)**

- **Try-catch block as in Java**
  - Can be the whole function body
- **Principle: Throw by value, catch by const reference**
  - Avoids unnecessary copying
  - Allows dynamic polymorphism for class types
- **Sequence of catches is significant**
  - First match wins
- **Catch all with ellipsis (...):**
  - Must be last catch
- **Caught exceptions can be rethrown with throw;**

```
try {  
    throwingCall();  
} catch (type const & e) {  
    //Handle type exception  
} catch (type2 const & e) {  
    //Handle type2 exception  
} catch (...) {  
    //Handle other exception types  
}
```

- The Standard Library has some pre-defined exception types that you can also use in <stdexcept>



- All have a constructor parameter for the "reason" of type `std::string`
- `std::exception` is the base class
  - It provides the `what()` member function to obtain the "reason"

- **Functions that have a precondition on their caller**

- When not all possible argument values are useful for the function

```
auto squareRoot(double x) -> double {  
    if (x < 0) {  
        throw std::invalid_argument{"square_root imaginary"};  
    }  
    return std::sqrt(x);  
}
```

- **Do NOT use exceptions as a second means to return values**

- Catch then becomes a "come from" and throw a "go to"



- CUTE provides **ASSERT\_THROWS(code, exception)**

```
auto testSquareRootNegativeThrows() -> void {  
    ASSERT_THROWS(square_root(-1.0), std::invalid_argument);  
}
```

```
auto testEmptyVectorAtThrows() -> void {  
    std::vector<int> empty_vector{};  
    ASSERT_THROWS(empty_vector.at(0), std::out_of_range);  
}
```

- You can also use **try-FAILM()-catch**

```
auto testForExceptionTryCatch() -> void {  
    std::vector<int> empty_vector{};  
    try {  
        empty_vector.at(1);  
        FAILM("expected Exception");  
    } catch (std::out_of_range const &) {  
        // expected  
    }  
}
```

```
auto check(int i) -> void {  
    if (i % 2) {  
        throw "is even";  
    }  
    throw 0;  
}  
  
auto printIsEven(int i) -> void try {  
    check(i);  
} catch(int) {  
    std::cout << "that's odd";  
} catch(...) {  
    std::cout << "very even";  
}
```

### Incorrect

It is syntactically correct C++, BUT:

- You must never use an exception on correct execution paths just to change control flow on the call-site. Use exceptions only for violations of pre- and post-conditions!
- Don't throw primitives. Use an exception from `<stdexcept>` or derive your own exception from `std::exception`.
- Catch by const reference, not by value!
- Condition is inverted

- Functions can be declared to explicitly not throw an exception with the noexcept keyword
- The compiler does not need to check it

```
auto add(int lhs, int rhs) -> int noexcept {  
    return lhs + rhs;  
}
```

- If an exception is thrown (directly or indirectly) from a noexcept function the program will terminate

```
auto fail() -> void {  
    throw 1;  
}  
  
auto lie() -> void noexcept {  
    fail();  
}
```

- **A good function**
  - Does one thing well and is named after that ("High Cohesion")
  - Has only few parameters ( $\leq 3$ , max 5)
  - Consists of only a few lines without deeply nested control structure
  - Provides guarantees about its result (aka its contract)
  - Is easy to use with all possible argument values its parameter types allow or provides consistent error reporting if argument values prohibit delivering its result (exception)
- **Pass parameters and return results by value (unless there is a good reason not to)**